

Dorothy Maguire and the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League

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Women's Intellectual History - Fall 2023



League History

- Men's baseball was in poor condition during World War II
- The league (operating from 1943-1954) was started by Philip K. Wrigley
- The first season featured four teams: Racine Bells, South Bend Blue Sox, Kenosha Comets, and Rockford Peaches
 - League functioned primarily in the midwest
- "All-American" image, used nonprofit setup to establish respectability and community morale around the league
- With that, there were policies and practices that were inevitably misogynistic
 - Ex: Charm school, skirted uniforms, appearance standards, behavioral rules
 - At the time, there was no baseball equipment for women
- Each team had a chaperone
 - Allowed many young women to play who otherwise couldn't
 - Called "surrogate mothers" in histories of the league

League History

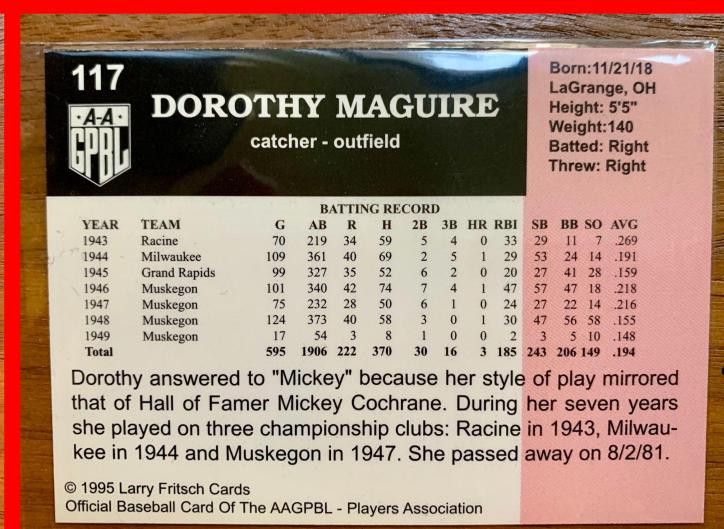
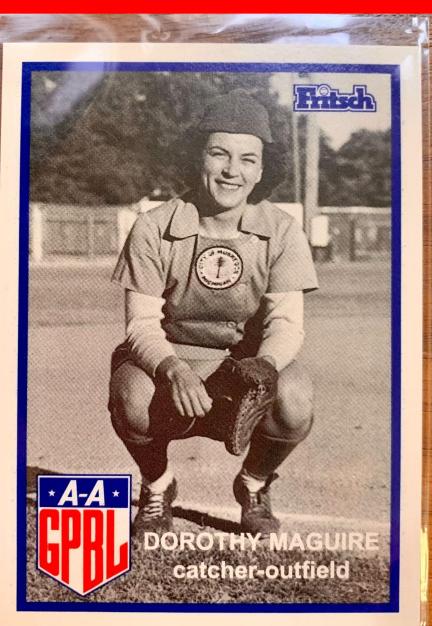
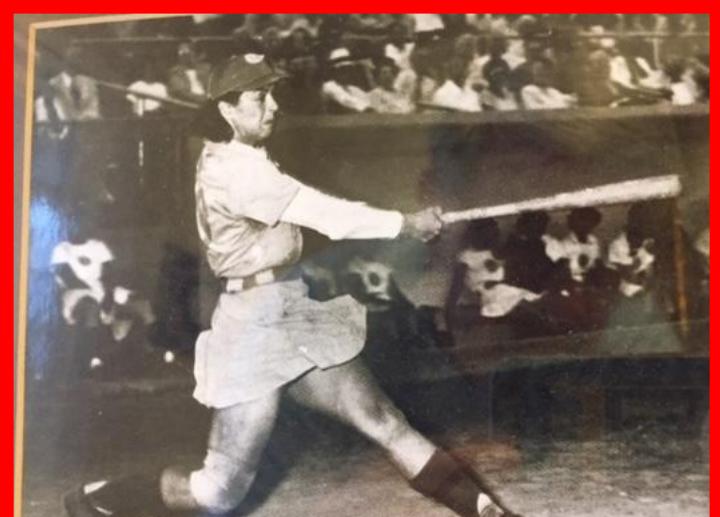


- The league found success, expanding after its first year
- Many were surprised that these "girls" could play ball
- Increases in attendance even after the war
- Cuban Campaign
 - Establishment of the Latin American Feminine Basebol League (LAFBBL)
 - Cuban players joined teams
 - Continued exhibition tours
 - Allowed the women to travel and discover other cultures
- The league had three administrative structures: Trustee Administration, Management Corporation, and Independent Team Owners
 - Financial problems
 - Decline in advertising and promotion
- Final season in 1954
- Many women were able to use their earnings to pursue education and other endeavors

Dorothy Maguire



- Born November 21, 1918 in LaGrange, Ohio
- Raised on a farm, which began her love of horses
- Worked for Erin Brew and played softball for their team
- Tried out and became one of the first 60 players
 - Racine Bells - 1943 League Champions



Dorothy answered to "Mickey" because her style of play mirrored that of Hall of Famer Mickey Cochrane. During her seven years she played on three championship clubs: Racine in 1943, Milwaukee in 1944 and Muskegon in 1947. She passed away on 8/2/81.

© 1995 Larry Fritsch Cards
Official Baseball Card Of The AAGPBL - Players Association



Born:11/21/18
LaGrange, OH
Height: 5'5"
Weight:140
Batted: Right
Threw: Right

Playing Career

- Drove a taxi cab in the off-season
- One of the older players, she helped coaches and chaperones
- Phone call that inspired a scene in “A League of Their Own”
- Nicknamed “Mickey” after Detroit Tigers HOF catcher Mickey Cochrane
- One of the highest-paid players in the league
- Stories from those who knew her:
 - Holding onto balls
 - Thrown out of a game for stepping on an umpire’s shoes
 - Helped pitchers as style changed
- Key word: tough
- Played her final season in 1949

Life After Baseball



- Remarried, had 6 children, was divorced
- Didn't talk much of her career, but did teach her kids how to play
 - "I played ball"
- Prominent horsewoman in Ohio
 - July 1966 cover of **Morgan Horse Magazine**
 - Chico's Flame - 1963 Grand Champion of Ohio
 - Kept showing even after breaking her leg
- Died August 2, 1981

Dorothy's Legacy

- “Woman at Bat” statue
 - Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, Ohio
 - Dedicated May 14, 2006 (Mother’s Day)
- *Mickey and Me* by Dan Gutman
- Member of the Ohio Women’s Hall of Fame



Continuing the Legacy of the AAGPBL

- 80th anniversary (1943-2023)
 - Reunion held in August in Kenosha, WI
- All-American Girls Professional Baseball League Players' Association
 - Reunions
 - Work to document the history (museums, scholars, etc.)
- Largely forgotten piece of history
- About 41 players are still living today
 - Only a handful can still attend reunions



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All other photos not cited are courtesy of Rick Chapman. Special thanks to Rick and George Chapman, who I interviewed about their mother.